




Speech By
Corrine McMillan

MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

 **Ms McMILLAN** (Mansfield—ALP) (8.10 pm): Firstly, I acknowledge the member for Southport. I know that other members on this side of the House also acknowledge the journey the member for Southport has been on. My good friend and neighbour the member for Springwood just acknowledged what a statesman the member for Southport is. Certainly we enjoy working with you, Rob. We acknowledge your journey and we wish you well on your road to wellness.

I extend a very warm congratulations to the Speaker of the House. I am confident that he will preside over the deliberations in this chamber with respect for the time-honoured conventions that have served this parliament so well in the past.

I rise today deeply humbled and honoured to continue to serve as the member for Mansfield in the 58th Parliament of Queensland. I acknowledge the First Nations peoples of Queensland, the traditional custodians of this land, and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging—the wonderful young leaders of tomorrow. I acknowledge the injustices that First Nations peoples have suffered for more than 235 years of colonisation and the multigenerational trauma and disadvantage that has tormented Indigenous peoples throughout this time.

I personally wanted to hear their stories. I wanted to hear the true history of Queensland. I was never taught that. I wanted to hear the truth, for it is their enduring culture, wisdom and resilience that inspires me to build a future grounded in respect, equity and opportunity for all. I acknowledge sister LeeAnne Enoch, the member for Algeester and a proud Quandamooka woman, who will continue to guide me and this team as we strive for a better future for First Nations peoples—especially for our beautiful First Nations children, as the future is theirs. For many years, in fact more than 20 years, I served and worked with some of our First Nations children, and I am more than honoured and proud to have spent just a moment with them in their lives.

I congratulate all new members of this House, particularly my parliamentary Labor colleagues the member for Sandgate, the member for South Brisbane—Deputy Speaker O'Shea, congratulations on your success—the member for Ipswich West, which is my home of birth and a seat that is rightfully Labor's. It is a seat that was settled by migrant families such as my late grandmother's Irish family and my late grandfather's Scottish family. He was a railway worker. They both sacrificed much to send their children to local Catholic schools. They knew that they could make no greater investment than in a good quality education for their children.

Being re-elected for a third term is an extraordinary privilege and a profound responsibility. Mansfield is a vibrant, diverse and compassionate community. It is one that I am proud to call my home. Over the past eight years I have been committed to representing every constituent with integrity, passion and purpose. This election result reflects the trust that our community places in my leadership, our shared values and our vision for a thriving future.

This victory belongs not only to me but also to the many volunteers, supporters and community members who stood by me throughout the campaign. Together we knocked on more than 25,000 doors and made over 12,000 phone calls. Those personal conversations highlighted to me the aspirations, concerns and hopes of our community. It is those voices that drive me to work tirelessly every day for every family, every child, every business and every individual in the Mansfield electorate. It is those values that drove me as a school leader and a teacher. It is those values that taught me so much about servant leadership.

As a former school principal and educator for over 25 years, I understand the importance of supporting and creating opportunities for young people and their families. A well-paying and secure job, a quality education, access to health care, safe housing and an inclusive community are the cornerstones of a prosperous society. Those values have shaped my approach to public service and my commitment to building a community where every young person and their family can thrive.

Labor's policies and investments have laid the foundation for a stronger Mansfield electorate. Under Labor, families in the Mansfield electorate have benefited from the most comprehensive cost-of-living relief package in the nation. It has provided tangible financial relief to households in my community. As many members know, the Mansfield electorate is not necessarily underprivileged. It is a community of great privilege. It is a community where many families work, which is in stark contrast to many of the communities that I led as a school leader. Even though Mansfield is a community where most people work—in fact, our unemployment rate is about 1.7 per cent—the \$1,000 off electricity bills directly reduced household expenses, allowing families to allocate savings towards other priorities such as education, health and daily living costs. Education is the priority, the only priority in many cases, for most families.

The introduction of 50-cent public transport fares is another important support for families of the Mansfield electorate. Mansfield is a diverse electorate with many residents commuting to work or school in Brisbane's CBD. For families, students and workers who rely on public transport, this initiative provided much needed financial relief. The policy was a clear example of how the government responded to the needs of local communities such as mine, making public transport affordable and accessible for everyone. The 20 per cent discount on vehicle registration also provided additional savings for the people of my community.

For young families, free kindergarten has made early education accessible. Communities such as mine believe that early education is a right. This is about giving children the best possible start in life while easing financial pressure on parents. Early childhood education plays a critical role in cognitive development and in the development of the whole child. The removal of fees meant that every child in my community could access quality learning from a very early age.

One of the most impactful initiatives has been free TAFE, which has opened doors for young people and adults to gain skills. Many of the young adults in my community are from other countries and this was just the assistance they needed. It provides an opportunity to upskill and to enter high-demand industries without the burden of tuition fees. This policy empowered individuals to pursue meaningful careers and support their families right across the community. In Mansfield, education is highly valued. This initiative has resonated deeply and I thank the Mount Gravatt TAFE staff for all that they do.

Every Queenslanders deserves a safe place to call home. Labor's \$3 billion housing plan has delivered over 900 completed social and affordable homes, some of which are in my community, and more than 1,100 are under construction. By banning rent bidding and increasing first home buyer grants, we have created fairer opportunities for locals to secure housing, ensuring stability and dignity for all. For young families in Mansfield, these policies mean less financial stress and more opportunities to build a secure future.

Labor's commitment to sustainability would have created new opportunities for the Queensland community. Our clean energy plan, projected to create 145,000 jobs by 2050, would have positioned Queensland as a leader in renewable energy. I acknowledge my good friend and neighbour the member for Springwood for his leadership in that project and that initiative. Solar powered schools and sustainable infrastructure in Mansfield demonstrate how we can embrace innovation whilst reducing costs and protecting our environment.

As a former educator, I know firsthand that a quality education transforms lives. That is why I have worked hard to secure significant investments in our local schools. I have 19 schools in my electorate and I am very proud to have the only Jewish school in Queensland, located at Burbank. I acknowledge the tough times that that community has experienced in the last couple of years.

I have worked hard to secure significant investments in our local schools to ensure every child in Mansfield has access to quality resources, facilities and opportunities to succeed. Let me tell the LNP what truly understanding community looks like: over \$200 million for Mansfield State High to deliver new buildings, refurbishments, upgrades, a new drop-and-go area, a new canteen, a new uniform shop and outdoor shaded areas; \$1.85 million for Mansfield State School to build a new learning centre, creating modern spaces where students can thrive; \$16.2 million for a multipurpose hall and an additional \$3.8 million for upgrades at Rochedale State High School—again, delivered in partnership with my good friend the member for Springwood—providing state-of-the-art facilities for academic and extracurricular activities; a new student administration building and additional classrooms at Rochedale State School to support its growing population; \$12.2 million for a new learning centre and \$3.2 million for a new canteen at Wishart State School, ensuring students have access to modern facilities that meet their educational and practical needs; \$4 million for new learning spaces at Mackenzie State Special School, enhancing the educational experience for students with disabilities and providing tailored support for their unique needs; and over \$1.8 million for Mount Gravatt East State School to deliver a new car park and upgrades to existing car parks, improving safety and accessibility for students and families as the school is located on two very busy roads.

These investments reflect my unwavering belief that a quality education is the key to unlocking potential. Education is not just about infrastructure, as we know; it is about ensuring that every child feels supported and valued. That is why I also champion initiatives like the installation of air conditioning in every classroom, powered by solar panels, to create comfortable and sustainable learning environments. These improvements benefit not only students but also teachers and staff, fostering an atmosphere where everyone can excel.

I am proud to lead an electorate that values and prioritises education. I will continue advocating for policies that support our schools, our students and their families. These investments are not just for today. They are not just for the students who are at school, as we speak. They are for the future of the Mansfield electorate and for the future of Queensland, ensuring that every child has the tools and opportunities that they need to thrive.

Health care has been another cornerstone of our efforts. The opening of the Eight Mile Plains satellite hospital has brought free health care closer to home, transforming how families in Mansfield access essential care. This facility is open seven days a week from 8 am to 10 pm, which ensures no-one needs to travel long distances for non-emergency medical services and leaves the emergency departments for emergencies. Whether it is for routine check-ups, minor treatments or preventive care, families can now receive the attention they need in a convenient, supportive environment. Signature investments in the Princess Alexandra and QEII hospitals have expanded capacity, ensuring timely care for Mansfield residents. The recently opened Mount Gravatt nurse-led clinic is already providing tailored support to locals, reinforcing our focus on accessible and compassionate care.

By bringing free healthcare services closer to home, parents no longer have to balance the demands of long commutes with the urgency of healthcare needs, allowing them to focus more on their work and family life. Children benefit from quick, more consistent care that supports their development and overall wellbeing. Access to free health care closer to home reduces financial strain, minimises travel related stress and fosters a greater sense of security and support where every family has the resources they need to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

Good policies, such as the 50-cent public transport fares, are most effective when supported by strong infrastructure. That is why I, along with the member for Springwood, fought hard for the critical infrastructure of the brand new Rochedale bus station and park-and-ride. Whilst completed, the LNP still have padlocks on the gates. When opened, this facility will address the growing transport needs of our communities and will ensure everyone can take full advantage of the affordable fares.

An opposition member: The locals just deserve to have it open.

Ms McMILLAN: I will take that interjection—our locals do deserve to have it opened. The Eight Mile Plains park-and-ride is overcrowded, and we are well and truly ready for the new park-and-ride to be opened. It will house 485 vehicles and includes nine accessible parking spaces. It has 44 solar panels, making it energy efficient, and storage for 30 bicycles—we have great connectivity based on the \$42 million Veloway that Labor built some years ago. It also includes modern amenities, such as CCTV and lighting throughout the car park and bus station, ensuring safety and security for all users, especially for our female commuters.

The vital infrastructure project is part of the \$750 million Pacific Motorway Eight Mile Plains to Daisy Hill upgrade, which has created up to 721 jobs, supporting our local community. I note that the LNP recently stalled the M1 extension project. Again, I urge the LNP to get on with the job and complete that project. This investment strengthens the connections between our suburbs and the broader community, enhancing the quality of life for everyone in my community of Mansfield.

These investments in education, health care and infrastructure directly benefit the young members of our community and their families. A child who is healthy, educated and supported is more likely to succeed, contribute and thrive. By prioritising health care, education and support services, we are building a brighter future for the Mansfield electorate, ensuring that every family has the resources and opportunities to prosper.

One of my proudest achievements this term was reconnecting Queensland with direct flights to China. This initiative was not just logistical; it was deeply personal for many families in my community who have been separated from loved ones for over three years due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many in my community commute to China for their working week and return home to their loved ones on weekends. The direct flights from Brisbane to Shanghai were absolutely imperative.

As the shadow minister for child safety, communities and the prevention of domestic and family violence, I am determined to continue building on Labor's legacy. My background has shaped my understanding of the challenges faced by our most vulnerable children and their families. I have witnessed how trauma, instability and family violence can impact a child's ability to thrive. I have also seen the transformative power of well-resourced communities and supported families. In this role, I will work tirelessly to champion early intervention programs, strengthen crisis support systems and ensure victims of domestic and family violence have access to safety and justice. Every child deserves stability. Every family deserves dignity. The future of Queensland depends on how we care for those in need, and I will not waver in my commitment to this cause.

Before I close, I want to take a moment to acknowledge those people who have made this journey so meaningful. To all those who voted Labor, who continue to vote Labor and who have voted Labor for the first time: I will continue to support you, I will continue to serve you and I will ensure that you are well supported every day. For those of you who did not vote Labor: I am certainly here for you too, and it is a great honour to represent our community and to support you as well.

I acknowledge our great Labor team. I acknowledge our leader, Steven Miles, and the work of our unions—Together, TWU, QTU and AWU. Thank you for your hard to work to ensure Labor remains in safe hands in Mansfield.